**20TH CENTURY MEDICINE – IMPACT OF WW1 AND WW2**

**Video Four - Impact of World War One and World War Two**

**Key Dates:**

WW1: 1914 - 1919

WW2: 1939 - 1945

**Medicine Through Time**

**TWENTIETH CENTURY**

**How did the First World War influence the development of medicine?**

**BATTLEFIELD SURGERY**
- Many were wounded, giving surgeons the opportunity to operate.
- Improved techniques used and there caused fewer amputations.
- Surgeons developed new techniques of removing broken bones and performing skin grafts.

**SURGERY AFTER THE WAR**
- Surgeons who learned skills as battlefield surgeons set up as civilian surgeons after the war.
- Surgeons worked on better ways of treating.

**Infection caused by deadly bacteria in the body**
- There was no treatment for the infected areas.
- Blood transfusions were made in order to stop the body from rejecting the injured area.

**BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS**
- Effectively used for the first time during WW1.
- Improvements were made in order to stop the body from rejecting the blood and transporting it to where it was needed.

**X-RAYS**
- Used during the war to find bullets and diagnose injuries.

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**How did the First World War improve surgery?**

**3 Mains Ways**

1. **Improved Antiseptic Surgery**
- The practice of antiseptic surgery was not suited to the battlefield and it was difficult to prevent infection of wounds under enormous pressure.
- Wounded soldiers would often develop gas gangrene from bacteria.
- Surgeons developed a way of cutting away infected tissue and soaking the wound with a saline solution. This was made possible by experiment and the massive number of casualties during wartime.

2. **Electrostatic Surgery**
- Surgeons successfully attempted brain surgery.

**WW1 also led to other improvements in surgery...**

As well as improvements in x-rays, blood transfusion and fighting infection, there were other improvements too:

- New techniques to repair broken bones were developed.
- Improvements were made in grafting skin which later formed the basis for plastic surgery.
- Surgeons successfully attempted brain surgery.

Surgeons who learnt skills in battlefield hospitals utilised their skills back home after the war.

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**What was the impact of the Second World War on the development of medicine and health in Britain?**

**BLOOD TRANSFUSION**
- første time during the Second World War
- donation centres set up to donate blood

**DRUGS**
- 1920s - 1930s: 1940s
- Penicillin was discovered and mass-produced to treat allied wounded soldiers on D-Day in 1944

**POVERTY**
- 1.5 million children were evacuated from cities to rural areas
- This highlighted the contrast between the living standards of the rich and poor
- It increased the government’s will to fight poverty more seriously after the war

**HYGIENE**
- Government policies were put up
- There were fewer cases of typhoid and dysentery

**DENTAL CARE**
- Dentist’s were needed and many produced to treat allied wounded soldiers on D-Day in 1944

**SURGERY**
- Advances made in the use of skin grafts and the treatment of burns

**How did the Second World War change the government’s role in providing public health?**

**RATIONING**

**Shortages of Food**

| The government set up the Emergency Medical Service to cope with casualties of the bombing |
| All hospitals were placed under government control and free treatment was provided |
| The governments measures were popular and workable |
| People began to think the government should control all hospitals and offer free treatment after the war |

**Heavy Bombing**

**Evacuation**

**1.5 million**

People who looked after the evacuees from inner cities were shocked at the state, hygiene and habits of some of some children

Some poor inner city children didn’t know how to brush their teeth

People began to think the government should play some role in ensuring the well being of children

The war changed attitudes, it became the government’s duty to look after it’s people

**Do you know your stuff?**

1. Give two ways in which surgery developed due to World War One
   - Skin grafts
   - Brain Surgery

2. What disease did wounded soldiers in WW1 often develop from the bacteria during surgical operations?
   - Gas Gangrene

3. How did evacuation helped to improve public health?
   - Highlighted differences between rich and poor

4. How did rationing during WW2 improve public health?
   - Some people a balanced diet by mix

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